

PATENT APPLICATION
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PRELIMINARY AMENDMENT

Prior to examination of this U.S. patent application filed under 35 U.S.C. §371 as national stage of International Patent Application No. PCT/AU00/00336 filed April 19, 2000, Applicant respectfully submits the following amendments and remarks to be entered into this patent application. A marked-up copy of the claims as amended by this Amendment is submitted herewith.

IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend claims 1-12 and 15, and add new claims 16-20 as follow:

1. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus including:

a first conventional shipping container which at least in part defines a fumigation chamber being adapted to contain produce to be fumigated, and

mobile fumigation means operatively coupled to the conventional shipping container, the mobile fumigation means including:

fumigant inlet means operatively coupled to the container to allow a flow of a fumigant into the fumigation chamber;

extraction means also being operatively coupled to the container to remove a majority of the fumigant from the fumigation chamber; and

absorption means being operatively coupled to the extraction means, the absorption means being designed to absorb substantially all of the fumigant extracted from the fumigation chamber.

2. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the mobile fumigation means is defined by a second shipping container.

3. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the fumigation chamber is a pair of shipping containers positioned alongside one another each operatively coupled to the mobile fumigation means.

4. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the mobile fumigation means is defined by a partition wall in the first shipping container, the wall separating the mobile fumigation means and the fumigation chamber.

5. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the absorption means comprises an absorption bed including activated carbon absorbing at least part of the fumigant extracted from the fumigation chamber.

6. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, also including a sliding bed or floor on which the produce resides, the bed or floor being configured to slide into and out of the fumigation chamber wherein loading and unloading of the produce to be fumigated can be performed externally of the chamber.

7. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the mobile fumigation means incorporates a source of the fumigant which is directly associated with a heating source, the latter used to convert the fumigant into a gaseous form.

- 8.(Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the fumigant inlet means is adapted to detachably couple to a mobile source of the fumigant.
9. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the mobile fumigation means incorporates a system control box and a system of fumigant delivery pipes and valves adapted in use to deliver fumigant from a supply source to the fumigation chamber.
10. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the fumigant inlet means includes a dispersion pipe system located in the upper part of the fumigation chamber.
11. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 1, wherein the fumigation chamber contains a plurality of small diameter floor- and wall-mounted pipes independently connected via an appropriate system of taps and connectors to a fumigant sampling and detection meter unit located in the control room.
12. (Amended) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 9, wherein the system control box contains a fumigant sampling and detection meter unit and power supply switches for mixing fans, exhaust fan, lights, gas heaters and valve actuators.
15. (Amended) A method of fumigating produce as defined in claim 14, further comprising washing at least part of the absorption bed to remove the absorbed fumigant.
16. (New) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 2, wherein the fumigation chamber is a pair of first shipping containers positioned alongside one another each operatively coupled to the mobile fumigation means.
17. (New) A fumigation apparatus as defined in claim 16, wherein the fumigant inlet means is adapted to detachably couple to a mobile source of the fumigant.